

**To:** Kelly Fearney[kelly.fearney@FEIEngineers.com]; Faulk, Libby[Faulk.Libby@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** R8 Documentation Unit Leader[R08\_Documentation\_Unit\_Leader@epa.gov]  
**From:** Peterson, Cynthia  
**Sent:** Tue 8/18/2015 8:55:29 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Animas Water Quality

Hello, Kelley.

I apologize for the delay in responding to your email. Thank you for your suggestions. Since many of them refer to technical information, I am sharing your email with folks on our technical staff as well. We appreciate you taking the time to provide such thoughtful feedback to us.

As information becomes available, it will be posted on the Gold King Mine webpage - <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine>. At this time, it is our best vehicle for sharing information with the public.

Best regards,

Cynthia Peterson

Cynthia Peterson

Community Involvement Coordinator

Public Affairs and Community Involvement

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VIII

1595 Wynkoop St. (8OC-PAI)

Denver, CO 80202-1129

303-312-6879 -- direct dial

**From:** Kelly Fearney [mailto:kelly.fearney@FEIEngineers.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2015 8:53 AM

**To:** Peterson, Cynthia; Faulk, Libby  
**Subject:** Animas Water Quality

Hi Cynthia and Libby,

I received your email addresses at the Durango public meetings and wanted to express some feedback:

1. Thank you for presenting more technical data at the public meeting on Sunday. While some people commented that the information was maybe too technical for the audience, I disagree. At both public meetings I observed friends and colleagues that work in hydrology, environmental, or engineering related fields and are capable of deciphering technical data.
2. I agree with many of my fellow citizens in concern that the data is slow become available to the public. Why, on the EPA's website, are we limited to data from 3-4 days ago?
3. I also agree with fellow citizens that while the technical data and water quality results are much appreciated data, the EPA needs to do a better job of presenting the information:
  - a. For example, it is possible to show low level constituents such as cadmium on the same graph as other constituents by using a secondary vertical axis. This is a pretty basic function in excel.
  - b. Including the baseline average data in the graph rather than listed below would be helpful.
  - c. Providing perspective on the health implications of these concentrations would also be helpful (e.g. immediate health risk from short-term exposure vs. minor skin irritation vs. carcinogen over long term ingestion, etc.)
4. With the lack of data available and the lack of quality of the data presented, it appears that the EPA does not have the necessary resources to be properly compiling information and responding to the public concerns. The County immediately hired Wright Water Engineers to help them assess the existing wells in the Animas Valley and to determine the most at risk well locations. If the EPA does not have the resources to plan remediation and respond to the public, then the EPA should consider hiring outside resources to help.
5. I am curious the position of Animas River Stakeholders leaders on the Gold King spill and what they suggest as short-term and long-term remedial action. Possibly the EPA needs to hold a 'meeting of the minds' to brainstorm ideas and create action plans. I envision this meeting to include key stakeholders, engineers, hydrologists, and environmentalists familiar with mine treatment and the history of the Silverton AMD.
6. The public has requested multiple times to see the Work Plan that was prepared in planning of the EPA's work. This should be made public and uploaded to the EPA's website.

7. It would be helpful to also upload Drinking Water MCL's, CDPHE stream standards of these stretches of River, and the Consensus Sediment Quality Guidelines. In addition, prepare graphs or worksheets that compare the water quality results to these standards.
8. Was the Gold King Mine actively discharging before this summer's work began? Was the Gold King Mine actively discharging before last summer's work began? If so, what were the average and peak discharge rates?
9. How many grams of these metals discharged and what percentage dropped out between Silverton and Durango? Please express this information both is concentrations (ug/L) and in total quantity (total grams).
10. The EPA has disclosed Emergency Response procedures related to public notifications, but I have not heard any information related to Engineering or Construction Emergency Response. After the initial slug of water, did the EPA attempt to immediately stop or remediate the drainage at the mine? For example, did the EPA consider lots of flowfill to try and plug the discharge? Did the EPA consider injecting caustic into the mine to try and adjust the pH and drop out metals before the drainage reaches Cement Creek? Did the EPA consider caustic or flocculant addition directly into Cement Creek? I understand that sediment ponds with caustic and floc are now being used, but what engineering emergency response was considered on days 1-3?

While this was an unfortunate event, I think there is a bright side to this accident....Finally our region is awake to the ongoing AMD in Silverton and aware that this issue is not limited just to one Town, but extends to many rural and urban populations in CO, NM, and Utah. Hopefully this new awareness will change the long-term clean-up conversation and help fast-track action.

Thank you for your hard work and I look forward to hearing back from you,

